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SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON THE SITUATION WITH REGARD TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE GRANTING OF INDEPENDENCE TO COLONIAL COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES

WESTERN SAHARA

Working paper prepared by the Secretariat

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I. GENERAL

1. A detailed account of general conditions and developments related to Western Sahara was provided in a previous working paper on the Territory (A/AC.109/1082).

II. CONSIDERATION BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY AT ITS FORTY-SIXTH SESSION

2. At the forty-sixth session of the General Assembly, reference was made to the question of Western Sahara by a number of representatives during their statements in plenary meetings (see A/46/PV.48, 49 and 68). An account of the Fourth Committee's consideration of the item at the same session is given in the related report of the Committee to the Assembly (A/46/629).

3. On 11 December 1991, on the recommendation of the Fourth Committee, the General Assembly adopted without a vote resolution 46/67 on the question of Western Sahara. The resolution reads as follows:

"The General Assembly,

"Having considered in depth the question of Western Sahara,

"Recalling the inalienable right of all peoples to self-determination and independence, in accordance with the principles set forth in the Charter of the United Nations and in General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) of 14 December 1960, containing the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples,

"Recalling also its resolution 45/21 of 20 November 1990,

"Recalling further that, on 30 August 1988, the Kingdom of Morocco and the Frente Popular para la Liberación de Saguia el-Hamra y de Río de Oro agreed in principle to the proposals of the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the current Chairman of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity in the context of their joint mission of good offices,

"Recalling Security Council resolution 621 (1988) of 20 September 1988 concerning the question of Western Sahara,

"Recalling also Security Council resolution 658 (1990) of 27 June 1990, approving the report of the Secretary-General of 18 June 1990, 1/ which contains the full text of the settlement proposals

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"1/ S/21360; see Official Records of the Security Council, Forty-fifth Year, Supplement for April, May and June 1990, document S/21360.

as accepted by the two parties as well as an outline of the plan of the Secretary-General for the implementation of those proposals,

"Noting with satisfaction the paragraph on Western Sahara in the report of the Tenth Ministerial Conference of the Non-Aligned Countries, held at Accra from 2 to 7 September 1991, 2/

"Having examined the relevant chapter of the report of the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, 3/

"Having also examined the report of the Secretary-General, 4/

"1. Takes note with appreciation of the report of the Secretary-General;

"2. Welcomes the unanimous adoption by the Security Council on 29 April 1991 of resolution 690 (1991) by which the Council approved the report submitted by the Secretary-General on 19 April 1991 5/ and decided to establish, under its authority, a United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara;

"3. Also welcomes the entry into force of the cease-fire in Western Sahara on 6 September 1991, in accordance with the proposal of the Secretary-General accepted by the Kingdom of Morocco and the Frente Popular para la Liberación de Saguia el-Hamra y de Río de Oro;

"4. Endorses the call by the Security Council upon the two parties to continue to cooperate fully with the Secretary-General in the implementation of his plan as described in his report of 18 June 1990 1/ and amplified in his report of 19 April 1991;

"5 Pays tribute to the Secretary-General for his action with a view to settling the question of Western Sahara by the implementation of his peace plan;

"2/ A/46/726, annex, para. 64.

"3/ A/46/23 (Part V), chap. VIII.

"4/ A/46/589.

"5/ S/22464 and Corr.1; see Official Records of the Security Council, Forty-sixth Year, Supplement for April, May and June 1991, document S/22464.

"6. Expresses its full support for the efforts of the Secretary-General for the organization and supervision by the United Nations, in cooperation with the Organization of African Unity, of a referendum for self-determination of the people of Western Sahara, in accordance with the objectives mentioned in his report of 19 April 1991;

"7. Requests the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples to continue to consider the situation in Western Sahara, bearing in mind the ongoing referendum process, and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its forty-seventh session;

"8. Invites the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its forty-seventh session a report on the implementation of the present resolution."

III. GOOD OFFICES OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

4. An account of a series of contacts and consultations undertaken in 1991 by the Secretary-General of the United Nations in the exercise of his good offices, within the context of General Assembly resolution 45/21 of 20 November 1990, is given in his report of 23 October 1991 to the Assembly at its forty-sixth session (A/46/589). Since the circulation of that report, the Secretary-General, in close cooperation with the current Chairman of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), has continued to exercise his good offices with the parties concerned.

5. In pursuance of Security Council resolution 690 (1991) of 29 April 1991, in which the Council requested the Secretary-General to keep it informed regularly of the implementation of his settlement plan for Western Sahara, the Secretary-General submitted a report to the Council on 19 December 1991. 1/ In his report, the Secretary-General, recalled the main elements of the United Nations plan as described in his report of 18 June 1990, 2/ and gave an account of developments that took place concerning the plan and the Territory. The Secretary-General indicated that owing to slow progress in the accomplishment of certain tasks, the timetable accepted by the Security Council in his report of 19 April 1991 3/ had to be adjusted. This was largely due to the complexity of the identification process, whose purpose was to establish the list of those who would vote in the referendum. The parties had tended to interpret differently the relevant paragraphs of the plan in this regard. The Secretary-General also reported that the general regulations governing the organization of the referendum had been promulgated and had been made available to the President of the Security Council on 11 November 1991. The mandate of the Identification Commission and instructions relating to its tasks had also been finalized. The United Nations was well aware that such a complex task as the identification of the Saharans could not be accomplished hastily and that the process of identification could be carried out only with the complete cooperation of the parties, in a spirit of justice and objectivity. Without such cooperation and without equity and justice on the

part of all concerned, particularly the tribal chiefs, the notables and the members of the ahels, the guidelines could not, by themselves alone, enable the United Nations to fulfil in a satisfactory manner the task entrusted to it.

6. At its 3025th meeting, on 31 December 1991, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 725 (1991), in which, inter alia, it approved the efforts of the Secretary-General for the organization and the supervision, by the United Nations in cooperation with OAU, of a referendum for self-determination of the people of Western Sahara and therefore welcomed the report of the Secretary-General; 1/ reiterated its support for further efforts by the Secretary-General for the organization and the supervision, by the United Nations in cooperation with OAU, of a referendum for self-determination of the people of Western Sahara in conformity with resolutions 658 (1990) and 690 (1991) by which the Council had adopted the settlement plan for Western Sahara; called upon the two parties to cooperate fully with the Secretary-General in the implementation of his settlement plan, which had been accepted by them; and invited the Secretary-General to submit a further report to the Security Council as soon as possible but in any event within two months of the date of passage of the resolution.

7. It was announced at a press briefing at United Nations Headquarters on 14 February 1992 that the Secretary-General had met with Mr. Mohamed Abdel Aziz, Secretary-General of the Frente Popular para la Liberatión de Saguia el-Hamra y de Rió de Oro (Frente POLISARIO) and other representatives of Frente POLISARIO in New York. The Secretary-General and Mr. Abdel Aziz had reportedly held constructive talks on the question of Western Sahara and had agreed on the importance of giving new momentum to the United Nations operations in Western Sahara.

8. On 28 February 1992, the Secretary-General submitted a further report to the Security Council 4/ on the situation as requested by the Council in its resolution 725 (1991). The report covered the military aspects of the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO), as well as all other aspects of the operation, including developments which had taken place since the last report to the Council on 19 December 1991. 1/ In the conclusions and recommendations of the report, the Secretary-General noted that the referendum in Western Sahara should have taken place in January 1992. However, it had not been possible to proceed in conformity with the original timetable, in view of continuing problems and persistent differences of interpretation with regard to the implementation of the Plan. He was not therefore in a position at that time to propose a revised timetable for implementation. He did believe that a target date should be set for the resolution of all outstanding issues that blocked the implementation of the Plan. In his view, three months would have been a reasonable period to set for this task. He would accordingly propose to report further to the Security Council not later than the end of May 1992. If by that date it had not been possible to reach agreement on implementation of the existing plan, it would be necessary to consider alternative courses of action and possibly adopt a new approach to the whole problem. Meanwhile, the Secretary-General recommended that the current level of MINURSO activity be maintained for the

above-mentioned period and that the mandate of the military elements of MINURSO continue to be restricted to verifying the cease-fire and cessation of hostilities in the areas defined in September 1991. 5/ He was convinced that the continued presence of MINURSO in those areas helped to maintain the cease-fire and thus created conditions for the remaining obstacles to be removed.

9. In a letter dated 23 March 1992 addressed to the President of the Security Council, the Secretary-General informed him that after extensive consultations with the parties concerned, he had decided to appoint Mr. Sahabzada Yaqub-Khan, former Minister for Foreign Affairs of Pakistan, as his Special Representative for Western Sahara to replace Mr. Johannes J. Manz, who resigned in December 1991. 6/

10. In a letter dated 25 March 1992 addressed to the Secretary-General by the President of the Security Council, the President informed the Secretary-General that the members of the Council welcomed that appointment. 7/ The members of the Council had also taken note of his report of 28 February 1992 on MINURSO 4/ and reiterated their support for his efforts and the efforts to be made by the Special Representative to accelerate the implementation of the settlement plan for a referendum for self-determination of the people of Western Sahara. Taking into consideration the urgency of the situation, they looked forward to a further report from him on the progress made in the implementation of the above-mentioned plan.

11. On 29 May 1992, the Secretary-General submitted to the Security Council a further report on the situation in Western Sahara. 8/ The report addressed the current status of the implementation of the plan in its military and other aspects. With regard to military aspects, the Secretary-General informed the Security Council that in its existing limited deployment, the role of the MINURSO military unit was essentially limited to monitoring and verifying the cease-fire into which the parties had entered. On other aspects, the Secretary-General stated that the Special Representative, shortly after his appointment, had made a tour of the mission area and the neighbouring countries from 19 to 30 April 1992. During the tour, the Special Representative had met not only with the King of Morocco and the Secretary-General of the Frente POLISARIO, but also with the Heads of State of Algeria and Mauritania. On the basis of his initial contacts with the parties, the Special Representative had concluded that their respective positions remained far apart and that those differences had continued to present serious obstacles to the implementation of the settlement plan. At the same time, he was encouraged to find that both parties continued to be committed to the plan as a framework for a just and permanent solution to the Western Sahara conflict. Additionally, both Algeria and Mauritania promised him their full support and cooperation in order to overcome existing obstacles and to facilitate the execution of the plan. In the light of his findings, at the conclusion of the tour, the Special Representative explored with each of the parties their readiness to hold talks with him in an effort to reactivate the plan. Both parties had agreed to do so. The talks were under way at that time and were being held within the framework of the settlement plan.

12. The Secretary-General also stated that it was his expectation that in their talks with the Special Representative both parties would cooperate with him in efforts to promote trust and confidence and to create an atmosphere conducive to the smooth implementation of the plan. Regardless of the progress of the current talks, he remained convinced of the need for maintaining the current military strength of MINURSO in Western Sahara in order to monitor adequately the cease-fire. During the Special Representative's visit to the area, he was assured by both parties that they would make every effort to adhere to the provisions of the cease-fire agreement and to cooperate with MINURSO within the framework of the settlement plan. Thus, the Secretary-General expected compliance with the cease-fire to improve significantly over the coming months.

13. In the light of the foregoing and bearing in mind the critical role MINURSO observers were playing for the maintenance of peace and tranquillity pending the settlement of the conflict, the Secretary-General recommended that the Council extend the mandate of MINURSO for a further period of three months, until the end of August 1992. He hoped that by then substantial progress would have been made to prepare the ground for the holding of a referendum leading to the peaceful settlement of the conflict. However, if by that time the peace process remained deadlocked notwithstanding the efforts of the Special Representative, the Security Council might wish to consider a different approach.

14. It was announced at a daily press briefing at United Nations Headquarters on 11 June 1992 that the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Western Sahara had met at Geneva with a delegation from Frente POLISARIO, who replied to some questions that the Special Representative put to it for clarification. The Special Representative described the discussions as "friendly and constructive". The meeting was part of the efforts to reactivate the plan.

15. In a statement before the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of OAU at its twenty-eighth ordinary session, on 29 June 1991, the Secretary-General of the United Nations said that the divergent views and different interpretations of some of the main elements contained in the settlement plan for self-determination of the people of Western Sahara had prevented the United Nations from making progress on a number of key issues, particularly that of the criteria for eligibility to vote in the referendum. Early in June, the members of the Security Council had welcomed the fact that the two parties had agreed to engage in discussions with the Special Representative with a view to reactivating the settlement plan. Such discussions had taken place recently and had proved useful. It was also considered important to maintain the United Nations force currently deployed in Western Sahara in order to monitor the cease-fire. 9/

16. In the introduction to his report to the same session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government, the Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity stated the following on the question of Western Sahara:

"It is a matter for regret that the Peace Plan, agreed upon by both Morocco and the POLISARIO Front and further endorsed by the United Nations Security Council in resolutions 658 (1990) and 690 (1991) and the international community at large, is still encountering obstacles with respect to its implementation. During my recent trip to New York, I had the occasion to raise this issue with the United Nations Secretary-General Dr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, to whom I conveyed our concern as well as our desire for a speedy implementation of the Peace Plan and OAU's readiness to make the contribution expected of it under the Peace Plan. We were encouraged by the recent designation of the United Nations Special Representative for Western Sahara and the steps taken to reactivate the process of implementation of the Peace Plan. With these recent developments, it is our fervent hope that, with the cooperation of the parties to the conflict, the peace process will be expedited so that a just and lasting solution could be found through the organization of a free and fair referendum for the people of Western Sahara." 10/

17. In a statement issued at the United Nations on 10 July 1992, it was announced that each party to the Western Sahara conflict had agreed to hold talks with the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Sahabzada Yaqub-Khan, in an effort to reactivate the settlement plan which had been deadlocked for several months. The first round of the talks, which involved consultations with the parties in Geneva, Rabat, Tindouf and New York, had concluded on 2 July. The Secretary-General had been briefed on the results of that first round of talks and had agreed that the talks would continue over the coming weeks along lines to which both parties had already consented, in the hope that it would be possible to achieve concrete progress towards eliminating the obstacles standing in the way of holding a referendum under United Nations auspices to determine the future status of Western Sahara. The Secretary-General expected both parties to continue to cooperate fully with the Special Representative in his efforts to reactivate the process leading to the referendum in the Territory and that, in that spirit, to refrain from any action which might adversely affect the progress of those efforts. 11/

IV. POLITICAL AND OTHER DEVELOPMENTS

(Covering the period from August 1991 to July 1992)

18. The Tenth Ministerial Meeting of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, held at Accra from 2 to 7 September 1991, welcomed the decision by the Security Council to set up MINURSO and the agreement by the two parties to observe a cease-fire with effect from 6 September 1991. The parties were urged to refrain from any action which would jeopardize the implementation of the United Nations settlement plan.

19. In his statement at the forty-sixth session of the General Assembly on 3 October 1991 (A/46/PV.20), Mr. Abdellatif Filali, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Morocco, said that Morocco attached extreme

importance to the so-called question of Western Sahara, since it represented an issue linked to the very destiny of Morocco and had considerable repercussions for the future of the subregion. There was an organic link between Western Sahara and the other parts of Morocco. Those ties had been consolidated for centuries. Likewise, the short period of time in which Morocco had to live divided under a very peculiar colonial rule had witnessed heroic resistance by the Moroccan people all over its territory in order to defend and preserve its unity by all means. While colonialism had divided Morocco into different zones - the international zone of Tangier, the French protectorate in the middle part of the country and the Spanish zone in the northern and southern provinces - the liberation of those zones had taken place gradually, one part after the other. The southern zone had been liberated starting with the province of Tarfaya in 1958, followed by Sidi Ifni in 1969, until Morocco had recovered in 1975 what was called the "Western Sahara", the last part of the southern zone which had been under the rule of the same Spanish authority. This recovery of Sahara had taken place on the basis of an international agreement signed at Madrid on 14 November 1975, of which the General Assembly had taken note. One wondered why the question of Western Sahara remained on the agenda after the recovery by Morocco of its Saharan provinces.

20. The good offices that the Secretary-General had undertaken since April 1986 had resulted in the elaboration of a framework plan approved by the Security Council in April 1991 in its resolution 690 (1991). Morocco totally supported that framework plan. The implementation of all the elements of that plan would undoubtedly require respect for all the time frames set in the successive stages provided for in the plan. Likewise, the translation of its provisions into practical measures would require negotiations that could ensure full implementation of both the letter and spirit of the plan.

21. Speaking as a petitioner at the 8th meeting of the Fourth Committee on 18 October 1991 (A/C.4/SR.8), a representative of Frente POLISARIO stated that, owing to the constant efforts of the United Nations and OAU, and to the significant concessions made by the Sahrawi side, it had finally been possible to adopt a peace plan for the decolonization of Western Sahara. The international community, which had formulated the peace plan and provided broad material and financial support, could legitimately ask what stage had been reached in its implementation. The most important step that had been taken had been the entry into force of the cease-fire on 6 September, which was the result of the persistence of the Secretary-General and the unanimity of the members of the Security Council. The Frente POLISARIO and the Government of the Saharan Arab Democratic Republic, however, were deeply concerned about recent events in Western Sahara. Morocco had officially declared its recognition of the peace plan but was systematically violating the obligations it had assumed. First, the Government of Morocco was trying to make it possible for tens of thousands of Moroccan citizens to take part in the voting under the referendum, instead of the electors envisaged in the plan, so as to undermine the process of the referendum in Western Sahara; secondly, since the entry into force of the cease-fire, the Moroccan side had already violated it nine times. Moroccan military aircraft, in violation of

the cease-fire provisions, were making flights over Sahrawi positions in the liberated territory; thirdly, although it was envisaged in the peace plan that the referendum should be held under conditions guaranteeing freedom and security, so that the people of Sahara could freely determine their fate, the Moroccan authorities in the regions they occupied were virtually maintaining a state of siege and had not yet released dozens of peaceful inhabitants of Sahara from detention; and fourthly, Morocco was trying to have the referendum held in an atmosphere of terror, without independent observers and representatives of the international press. All those facts could be verified, and many of them were already known to the international community. In the view of the Sahrawi side, the implementation of the peace plan was being jeopardized by the position of Morocco, in defiance of world public opinion as clearly expressed by the General Assembly and the Security Council. The Sahrawi side would continue to cooperate with the United Nations to ensure the successful fulfilment by MINURSO of the noble peace objective established for it by the international community.

22. At its 14th meeting, on 29 October 1991, the Fourth Committee adopted, without a vote, draft resolution A/C.4/46/L.2/Rev.2, as orally revised, on the question of Western Sahara. On 11 December 1991, on the recommendation of the Fourth Committee, the General Assembly adopted the draft resolution without a vote as resolution 46/67 (see para. 3).

23. In an aide-mémoire issued by the Permanent Mission of Morocco to the United Nations on 16 December 1991, Morocco stated that its adversaries were circulating a number of erroneous ideas on its position and conduct with regard to the question of Sahara. The aide-mémoire also provided clarification concerning the alleged military offensives and violations of the cease-fire. With regard to the alleged obstruction of the work of the Identification Commission, it recalled that Morocco had extended its utmost cooperation to the Identification Commission both for its establishment and field visit and for its activities. Those referring to massive deployments of Moroccan subjects tended to forget that, until the referendum had taken place and its results made public, the Sahara remained under the full and complete authority of Morocco and the territory had been governed by Moroccan law. Furthermore, the Moroccan Government was certainly not seeking to change any element in the settlement plan contained in reports of the Secretary-General of 18 June 1990 and 19 April 1991. 2/, 3/ In keeping with the information contained in those reports, Morocco could not allow the 1994 census document to result in the exclusion of bona fide Western Saharans who had taken refuge in the North and who had not been able or had not wanted to be registered, or who had been omitted by the Spanish authority. It would also be extremely unfair to demand at all costs that the census alone should serve as the basis for a global referendum for the sole purpose of favouring a partial group or faction. The memorandum also stated that Morocco was maintaining close contact with the United Nations in order to ensure the effective implementation of the settlement plan in the Sahara.

24. In a letter dated 23 December 1991 addressed to the President of the Security Council by the Permanent Representative of Ghana in his capacity as

Chairman of the Group of African States, 12/ the Chairman transmitted a copy of a statement of the General Secretariat of OAU on the report of the Secretary-General of the United Nations of 19 December 1991 on Western Sahara. 1/ The General Secretariat of OAU took note of the report and observed that new elements with respect to the criteria for identification were being proposed by the Secretary-General of the United Nations in the report. OAU reaffirmed its commitment to the observance of the peace plan as accepted by the two parties in conflict as well as its support for the implementation of the plan in its entirety with the full cooperation of the two parties. Any change or modification to the elements of the peace plan already accepted by the parties in conflict would be prejudicial to the process as well as to the organization of a free and fair referendum for self-determination by the people of Western Sahara. In this regard, OAU wished to appeal to members of the Security Council to ensure that the integrity of the peace plan as accepted by the parties in conflict and endorsed by the international community was safeguarded and its terms unaltered.

25. In a letter dated 24 December 1991, addressed to the President of the Security Council the Permanent Representative of Morocco to the United Nations, referred to the foregoing statement of the General Secretariat of OAU, and questioned the right of the Chairman of the Group of African States to circulate the OAU statement since he had not been authorized by the Group to do so on its behalf. That Group had not convened either to discuss the contents of the statement or to determine the appropriateness of such action on its behalf. Furthermore, the OAU statement itself claimed to convey the position of its "General Secretariat", which as such could not legally express the views of the member States; the statement reflected even less the point of view of the current Chairman of OAU concerning the question of Western Sahara. 13/

26. In a communication dated 26 December 1991 addressed to the President of the Security Council, the Permanent Representative of Algeria to the United Nations enclosed a document taking note of the report issued by the Secretary-General of the United Nations on 19 December 1991 1/ concerning the question of Western Sahara and stating Algeria's position on that document. The statement observed, inter alia, that by accepting the peace proposals of 1988 and Security Council resolutions 658 (1990) of 27 June 1990 and 690 (1991) of 27 April 1991, the two parties had explicitly taken cognizance of and accepted that the 1974 census would be the reference point and base for identifying the Saharans who should participate in the referendum for self-determination. To introduce new elements without the prior consent of the two parties would be incompatible with the spirit and the letter of the various resolutions of the Security Council and could jeopardize the considerable efforts that had been made by the international community over a number of years to bring peace to the region. 14/

27. Speaking on the question of Western Sahara at the opening session of the Special Committee on 5 February 1992, the Secretary-General stated that the question was a matter of particular concern to the international community. Under the guidance of the Security Council, which remained seized of the

question, he would actively pursue the efforts of the United Nations, in cooperation with OAU, to find a peaceful, just and lasting solution. He had recently had positive contacts with the two protagonists in the conflict, which had been most productive (A/AC.109/PV.1398).

28. In the introduction to his report to the OAU Council of Ministers at its fifty-fifth ordinary session, held at Addis Ababa in February 1992, the Secretary-General of OAU stated the following:

> "In Western Sahara, the hopes raised following the adoption of resolutions 658 (1990) and 690 (1991) by the United Nations Security Council and the initial steps taken by the United Nations in implementation of these resolutions, did not materialize due to some difficulties. I had the occasion to brief the Council, last February, on my previous discussions with the former United Nations Secretary-General in connection with the role the OAU was to play in the implementation of the Peace Plan on Western Sahara. I again raised this issue with him, last October, and I stressed the importance of OAU's contribution in the implementation process in Western Sahara and the need for constant and close consultations between our two organizations on this issue. I stated clearly that it is important for us to know the exact role that the OAU was expected to play in the process so that I could report accordingly to the legislative organs of the organization and also to allow us to take the necessary measures.
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> "Recently, I went to New York to meet the United Nations Secretary-General, H.E. Dr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali. I seized this early opportunity to discuss with him some important issues of concern to the organizations, including the pending issue of Western Sahara. I reiterated our concern about the need for a speedy solution to the issue through the holding of a free and fair referendum according to the provisions of the Peace Plan agreed upon by the parties to the conflict and endorsed by the Security Council and the international community as a whole. I also underscored our interest in a speedy settlement of the conflict so that peace and security could prevail in that region of the continent. I assured him that the OAU was naturally disposed to make its concrete contribution to the implementation of the Peace Plan, it being understood that it would be properly consulted and involved in all the stages of the process. Finally, I reiterated our readiness to work closely and to cooperate with the United Nations in order to fulfil what is our joint responsibility in conformity with the Peace Plan." 15/

29. On 28 February 1992, the Commission on Human Rights meeting at Geneva, adopted, without a vote, a resolution on Western Sahara. 16/

30. On 21 June 1992, it was reported that the Frente POLISARIO had warned the authorities at Rabat against going ahead with planned elections in the Territory and said that the presence of a United Nations contingent in Western Sahara was a sign of both the Territory's "special status, distinguishing it from Morocco, and of the will of the international community to see it decolonized once and for all". 17/

31. On 23 June 1992, it was reported that the Minister of Internal Affairs of Morocco, Mr. Driss Basri had opened a voter-registration campaign in preparation for elections in Western Sahara. Laayoune, the main town of Western Sahara, was reportedly chosen for launching the campaign because, according to Mr. Basri, the town was "the destination of the Green March on 6 November 1975 ... Today it is a march for sincere and true democracy". 18/

Notes

1/ S/23299.

2/ S/21360.

3/ S/22464 and Corr.1 (English and Spanish only).

4/ S/23662.

5/ S/23008 and S/23009.

6/ S/23754.

7/ S/23755.

8/ S/24040.

9/ See United Nations press release SG/SM/4774, 29 June 1992.

10/ Organization of African Unity document CM/1706 (LVI), part I, para. 11.

11/ See United Nations press release SG/SM/4781, 10 July 1992.

12/ S/23315.

13/ S/23321.

14/ S/23323.

15/ Organization of African Unity document CM/1681 (LV), part I, sect. IV.A.

16/ See Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1992, Supplement No. 2, (E/1992/22-E/CN.4/1992/84).

17/ Agence France-Presse dispatch, Algiers, 21 June 1992.

18/ Reuters dispatch, Laayoune, 23 June 1992.